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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Friday, April 8, 2005

For Information Contact Public Affair

HARRIET BERNICK

Telephone: (602) 514-7736

Cell: (602) 525-0527

# **YUMA BUSINESSMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO THREE COUNTS OF BRIBING A PUBLIC OFFICIAL**

TUCSON, Ariz. -- The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that on April 6, 2005, Stephen J. "Buddy" Merten, 62, of Yuma, Ariz., pleaded guilty to three counts of bribing a public official, in federal district court.

Mr. Merten, who operates B & B Amusements, had been charged with violating Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 201(b)(1)(C). Count one of the three-count indictment alleges that on or about November 18, 2002, in Tucson Ariz., Mr. Merten offered to pay a Revenue Officer of the Internal Revenue Service \$20,000 to eliminate approximately \$300,000 in delinquent payroll taxes. Count two alleges that on or about April 3, 2003, in Yuma, Ariz., Mr. Merten paid the IRS Revenue Officer \$2,000 as partial payment to eliminate the delinquent taxes. Count three alleges that on or about July 15, 2003, in Yuma, Ariz., Mr. Merten made another payment of \$2,000 to the IRS Revenue Officer.

A conviction for bribery of a public official in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 201(b)(1)(C) carries a maximum penalty of a fine of up to three times the monetary equivalent of the thing of value, or \$250,000, whichever is greater, or imprisoned for not more than 15 years, or both.

Sentencing is set before Judge Frank R. Zapata on June 16, 2005.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Internal Revenue Service.

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The prosecution is being handled by Daniel J. Santander, Assistant U.S. Attorney,  
District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-03-2348-TUC-FRZ  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2005-067

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